



ATTACHMENT A

Remarks

Considering the matters raised in the Office Action in the same order as raised, acceptance for the examination proceedings of the drawings previously submitted is gratefully acknowledged.

Claims 1-11, 13-19, 21-26 and 28 have been provisionally rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 101 as "claiming the same invention as that of claims 1-25 of co-pending Application No. 09/993,972." This rejection is respectfully traversed.

It is noted that Application No. 09/993,972 is abandoned and hence a double patenting rejection is clearly not appropriate here. However, the attention of the Examiner is referred to Application No. 10/076,232, which is a continuation-in-part of Application No. 09/993,972. To the extent that the Examiner intends to make a further double patenting rejection, and to the extent that such a double patenting rejection would be proper, Applicant provisionally proffers the filing of a suitable Terminal Disclaimer so that such a double patenting rejection can be overcome.

Claim 1-7, 10-17, 20-24, 27 and 28 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being "anticipated by" Mano et al (hereinafter Mano). This rejection is respectfully traversed.

In rejecting claim 1, the Examiner contends that "Mano discloses monitoring a plurality of ports included on the information handling system" and refers to column 3, lines 2-10. These lines provide that "[w]hen a device is added to the serial bus, a graphical image representing that device is automatically displayed in the graphical user interface." These lines also provide that "when a device is removed from the serial bus, the graphical image representing that device is grayed out, leaving a shadow of the graphical image until the device is re-coupled or the system is powered off." In an alternative embodiment, "the application can be implemented remove the device from the graphical user interface as soon as the device is removed from the serial bus."

It is respectfully submitted that there is no disclosure in the Mano patent of monitoring a plurality of ports. Instead, Mano is concerned with determining when a device is added to the serial bus and then providing for automatic display of a graphical image representing that device.

Moreover, it is respectfully submitted that there is no teaching in the Mano patent of determining utilization by a utilization device of a particular port a plurality of ports. In this regard, the passages of the Mano patent to which the Examiner refers, viz., column 3, lines 11-20, simply provide that, in "a further alternate embodiment, the device is also grayed out within the graphical user interface when the device is powered off, but remains coupled to the serial bus." In addition, this portion of the Mano patent refers to tasks performed by the devices coupled to the serial bus being controlled and monitored by the user through the graphical interface of the computer system, and provides for the use of a cursor control device in choosing options displayed in the graphical user interface. This portion of the reference also states that one or more "task windows " may be included in the interface to help the user select the task to be performed. It is respectfully submitted that this is not a teaching of this feature of claim 1.

In summary, for at least the reasons set forth above, it is respectfully submitted that the Mano reference does not meet the terms of claim 1 and, in particular, does not disclose monitoring of a plurality of ports and determining utilization by a device of a particular port of the plurality of ports.

It is respectfully submitted that the dependent claims set forth further features not disclosed by the Mano reference. For example, claim 2 provides that the step of determining utilization by the device of the port includes determining which port of the plurality of ports to which the device is communicatively coupled.

In rejecting claim 2, the Examiner has made reference to column 3, lines 20-31. It is respectfully submitted that these lines merely refer to selection of a task to be performed and provide that, inter alia, when a task is selected, "controls, commands and data relating to that task are displayed within a control display window of the graphical interface." These lines also refer to representing the flow of data between devices over the serial bus network "by an animated data screen within the graphical representation of the bus structure." These lines further refer to the animated data stream disappearing when data stops flowing and to the animated stream of data temporarily flowing between the graphical image of a new device and the computer system when a new device is added. Again, it is respectfully submitted that the passages are simply not a teaching of the subject matter of claim 2.

With respect to claims 4 and 6, these claims are concerned with positioning the display of content in a priority based on the utilized port (claim 4) and assigning a priority to at least a portion of the plurality of ports wherein the assigned priority is utilized to configure the user interface(claim 6).

In rejecting these claims, the Examiner has referred to column 4, line 64 to column 5, line 6. These lines refer to the task windows and to displaying generic tasks based on the general capabilities of the system or displaying specific tasks based on the type of devices coupled to the serial bus network and the capability of those devices. Again, it is not seen that the passages constitute a teaching of the subject matter of claims 4 and 6.

Turning to claim 7, this claim relates to the provision of a first port located on a front portion of the chassis and a second port located on a rear portion of the chassis.

The Examiner refers to column 3, lines 2-5, but these lines merely relate to a graphical image representing a device added to the serial bus being automatically displayed in the graphical user interface. It is respectfully submitted that the conclusions regarding the location of the ports reached in the rejection of claim 7 clearly do not follow from the actual teachings of Mano relating to a serial bus structure.

Claim 12, as amended, recites that the monitored plurality of ports are arranged in at least two groupings and the two groupings are utilized to configure the user interface.

In rejecting this claim, the Examiner has made reference to column 4, lines 39-41 of Mano. However, these lines merely provide that "a graphical representation of the bus structure is shown connecting each of the represented devices together." Again, it is simply not seen that this is a teaching of arranging the monitored plurality of ports in at least two groupings which are used to configure the user interface.

Before considering the rest of the claims, it is noted that claims 8, 9, 18, 19, 25 and 26 have been rejected under 35 USC 103(a) as being "unpatentable over" the Mano patent in view of the Fujiyoshi et al patent. This rejection is also respectfully traversed.

The rejection here concerns the assignment of priority features, and thus is also relevant to the rejection of, for example, claims 4 and 6. The Fujiyoshi et al patent

discloses an information processing apparatus wherein a main printer, at least one auxiliary printer and a disallowed printer are differently designated. If a problem (such as paper deletion, jamming, toner depletion, or the like) develops in the main printer during the course of a printing operation using the main printer, printing is then continued using the auxiliary printer. Any use of the disallowed printer is inhibited in order that this printer can be dedicated to another information processing apparatus.

As the Examiner points out, lines 31-42 of column 4 of the Fujiyoshi et al reference provide that a series of printers are designated based on the printer names and the reference numerals 1, 2, 3 and 0, wherein highest priority is given to printer "1," which serves as the main printer, and the auxiliary printers are used in order of the priority designations "2" and "3". The designation "0" indicates a disallowed printer. This passage also provides that the "location of a printer is specified by the port possessed by the communication unit 204."

It is respectfully submitted that this prioritization of printers based on number designations is not the same thing as assigning different priorities to different ports and using the assigned priority to configure the user interface. Thus, it is respectfully submitted that claims such as claims 8 and 9 patentably distinguish from the Mano and Fujiyoshi et al patents, even assuming for the sake of argument that the combination proposed is a proper one.

Turning to the other claims, the independent claims define over the references, whether taken singly or in combination, for basically the same reasons set forth above in support of the patentability of claim 1. Similarly, claims 14 and 16 are patentable for basically the same reasons as claims 4 and 6 while claim 22 is patentable for basically the same reason as claim 14. Similarly, claims 17 and 18 and claims 24 and 25 are patentable for basically the same reasons as claims 7 and 8 and claim 19 is patentable for basically the same reason as claim 9. Finally, claims 20 and 27 are patentable for basically the same reasons as claim 12.

New claims 29 and 30 have been added which set forth further aspects of the "priority assignment" features of the invention. In this regard, claim 29 provides that priority is assigned further based on temporal conditions wherein a later connected peripheral device is given higher priority than a peripheral device that has already been

connected, while claim 30 provides that priority is assigned based on using a look-up table based on heuristic data. Again, these features simply are not disclosed in, nor suggested by the references.

Finally, some very minor amendments have been to a number of claims to improve the form thereof and to correct minor grammatical errors. It will be evident that these amendments do not in any way impact patentability.

Allowance of the application in its present form is respectfully solicited.